



Avoid The “Invisible Killer”

Breathe easy this winter and avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. CO is called the “Invisible Killer” because it's a colorless, odorless, and poisonous gas. More than 150 people in the U.S. die every year from accidental nonfire-related CO poisoning associated with consumer products, including generators. Other products include faulty, improperly used or incorrectly vented fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters, and fireplaces.

Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed. Initial symptoms of low to moderate CO poisoning are similar to the flu but without a fever. They include:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Dizziness

High-level CO poisoning results in progressively more severe symptoms, including:

- Mental confusion
- Vomiting
- Loss of muscular coordination
- Loss of consciousness and ultimately death

Protect your family from CO poisoning with these tips:

- Install and maintain CO alarms in central locations outside each sleeping area and on every level to provide early warning.
- Use generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from doors, windows, and vents.
- Make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of debris.